

Organic Dairy Co-op

(Continued from Page A11)

dairy animals receiving certification for organic milk production. The cooperative allows a transition feeding program for new and certifiable dairy herds. For nine months, a "significant" portion of the daily ration must consist of certifiably organically grown feed. Then for the 90 days prior to certification for organic milk sales, the feed must be 100 percent certified organic.

While producing milk and abstaining from the use of antibiotics and breeding and production hormones, including oxytocin (for milk let-down), could be considered financially risky business practices for those who can't afford the loss in production of

milk or replacement animals, it is part of the mainstay of the CROPP organization.

In a letter from Fiscus, he stated, "... the standards which have arisen in (CROPP) membership requirements and testing have been established by the consumer.

"An example of this consumer-oriented quality control is seen in the prohibition of antibiotic use on these dairies.

"This is not a requirement of most organic certification agencies nationwide, and probably will not be a requirement of the national standards which will be implemented by the USDA in the near future.

"The prohibition of antibiotics

and hormones (breeding and lactation) came about in CROPP herds because the people buying the milk were primarily concerned about antibiotic residues in milk in addition to the media alarm about (BST)."

"Consumers that want milk with these qualities are willing to pay the premium prices which these practices require on the farm, and then some."

Hoover said maintaining the antibiotic prohibition has not proven to be a problem for him, since he had been drifting toward production with as few purchased inputs as possible.

He said he had virtually stopped using many of the inputs anyway, when he first heard of CROPP during the 1980s. He said he drifted away from using as much fertilizer after he compared the local land-grant university extension recommendations and found they were about half of what his fertilizer cooperative was recommending for his farm.

About that time, he had also had a bad experience with retained herbicidal activity on an alfalfa crop.

What happened was that he sprayed an herbicide on corn and then drought set in. "I cut the corn early, and put in alfalfa," Hoover said. "The spray didn't affect the weeds, but it damaged the alfalfa.

"My concerns were that I felt I would raise better alfalfa with no spray," Hoover said.

About 1988, he quit using the services of the fertilizer cooperative, though he continues soil testing.

About the same time, he heard about CROPP.

"I saw an article in the newspaper that they were beginning to sell organic milk, but CROPP was about three hours away, so it wasn't feasible (to ship milk there)."

Then, in late 1993, Hoover attended a CROPP informational meeting and saw that he met most of the qualifications for raising the organic milk.

About the beginning of 1994, he decided to join CROPP and he got certified in March through the OCIA.

At first, CROPP provided Hoover with a list of organic feed

suppliers, though later he got an expanded list from OCIA.

He buys all his grain and protein products and he is linked in with about four local organic feed cash crop farmers who supply his needs.

Every year he has to be recertified and inspected. If there are no problems, there is one inspection. Problems can result in additional inspections.

However, CROPP has a different inspection system than what applies in general to the average dairy producer. The average producer doesn't really have an effective appeal process comparatively.

In the CROPP system, there is the organic inspector who reports to a review committee, the farmer reports to the review committee and the farmer works with the inspector.

Both Fiscus and Hoover said the arrangement prevents inspectors from carrying to much unchecked authority.

Hoover said that initial inspection fee for OCIA is about \$125 and they get a percent out of the sales, based on an income-derived sliding scale fee.

Member-farmers of CROPP are all self-bonded and use certificates of deposit (CDs) for collateral that are in the farmer's name and the cooperative's name. The cooperative uses that as collateral.

In a more recent letter, Fiscus stated, "Joining our cooperative truly means that you become an owner and we now work for you.

"In order for the cooperative to deliver the service you need as a member/landowner, we need you to make a commitment to the co-op both financially and, more importantly to cooperative marketing.

"There are two investment requirements in our cooperative which all members satisfy. These investments help the cooperative to finance part of the growth that each new farmer creates.

"The first investment is called a capital base plan, which is an entry level investment based on the projected hundredweights to be sold in the coming year.

"This investment is handled uniquely by CROPP in that your investment is in the form of a certificate of deposit in your name and the cooperative's name, which is placed in an agreed-upon bank.

"You receive the interest and, if you leave the cooperative, the CD is released.

"We allow producers in new regions six months to satisfy the

capital base plan requirement, which gives them time to repay their initial feed investment and to establish a relationship of integrity with CROPP."

A second investment required for CROPP membership is a 25 cents per cwt. contribution which goes into a revolving loan fund, use to finance the co-op's inventory.

"This 25 cents is automatically credited to your revolving fund account and is in addition to your cash pay price," he said. "This amounts to an extra 25 cents over and above your cash pay price."

Fiscus said that actually seeing CROPP sell its locally produced Organic Valley label milk products in mainstream groceries in the Mid-Atlantic states is months, if not more than a year away, but farmers in southern Pennsylvania and Maryland are being sought now to build a production base.

Once producers and processors and retailers are in line, the engine of supply and demand for this product can begin to work.

Since it may take up to almost two years to become certified organic, Fiscus said he needs to know of interest soon so he can help producers start getting on line with what they need to do.

One thing he said is guaranteed is the the base pay price for mid-Atlantic CROPP farmers would be 75 cents per cwt. above the usual CROPP pay price.

"When the conventional milk price climbs to within \$3 of the then-current organic pay price, the organic price will climb accordingly to maintain a \$3 minimum premium," he stated. "The conventional milk price for this pool will be defined as the Federal Order No. 2 published blend price for your zone."

Pay is based on component values, which are determined on the overall values of each component as determined by the products produced for the entire cooperative.

Fiscus said he will be making farm visits to help farmers who have not yet begun to prepare for certification as organic producers.

He said it should be easier to get certified now, rather than later, basically because the federal government hasn't yet become too involved.

Hoover said that, as far as he's concerned, "If I consider my milk market to the conventional market, mine is real stable."

For more information, call Fiscus at (301) 478-2103.

Public Auction Register

Closing Date Monday 5:00 P.M.
of each week's publication

LATE

SAT. DEC. 28 - 11:30AM
Commercial Items, Collectibles, Furniture, Households, Tools, Misc. 22 W. Clay St., Lancaster, PA. (Between Prince & Queen St.) Former Lancaster RCS Bus Terminal. Endy's Auction Service.

MON JAN 6 - 3PM Furniture, Collectibles, Firearms, Tools & Equipment, Appliances, Jewelry, Household Murry

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TUES. JAN 7 - 9:30AM Farm Equipment, Household, Misc 1/2 Mi. South of Topton Toward Fleetwood, Turn onto Old Road Toward Bowers, Go 1000 Ft., Turn into the Farm Lane at Eli Nolt Mailbox, Berks Co., PA. Selling for Eli Nolt. Ralph W Zettlemoyer Auctioneer

GUN AUCTION

Estate of Andrew C. Long,
With Additions
FRI., JAN. 10, 1997
7:00 PM

Location: App. 40 miles north of Harrisburg, PA, along Route 25, midway between Gratz & Berrysburg, at Crossroads Sale & Market

- 1) Browning 12-Ga. Lightning Over & Under w/Case;
- 2) Remington Wingmaster Mod. 870 TC 12-Ga.;
- 3) Winchester Mod. 61 22 MAG R.F w/Redfield 2X-7X Scope;
- 4) Winchester Mod. 70 30-06 Spring. w/Leopold 2X-7X Scope;
- 5) Ithaca 12-Ga. MX8 Over & Under w/Case (Custom Crafted by Manifattura ArmiPrazzi) Presentation Piece;
- 6) Winchester Mod. 43 218BEE w/Redfield 3X-9X Scope;
- 7) Winchester Mod. 1200 12-Ga. w/Case;
- 8) Remington Gamemaster 760 .308 Win Caliber;
- 9) Remington Mod. 1100 12-Ga.;
- 10) Browning 12-Ga. Over & Under w/Case, Made in Belgium;
- 11) H.Kriehoff OHG ULM Germany Mod. 32 Over & Under 12-Ga. w/Case;
- 12) Belgium Double-Barrel Hammer Shotgun 12-Ga. by Enterprise Arms;
- 13) Springfield Mod. 56 22-Cal.;
- 14) 2 Remington 12-Ga. Barrels;
- 15) Hand Gun - Colt Detective Special 38 Special Caliber w/Holster;
- 16) Hand Gun - Colt ACE 22 Long Rifle Automatic;
- 17) Winchester Mod. 12 16-Ga. w/Choke;
- 18) Winchester Mod. 12 12-Ga. w/Choke;
- 19) Ithaca Mod. 37 12-Ga.;
- 20) Ithaca Mod. 37 12-Ga.;
- 21) Stevens Mod. 73 22-Cal.;
- 22) Stevens Mod. 35 22-Cal.;
- 23) H&R Single Barrel 12-Ga.;
- 24) Champion Single Barrel 10-Ga.;
- 25) H&R Single Barrel 12-Ga.;
- 26) Mossberg Bolt Action 20-Ga.;
- 27) Winchester Mod. 12 12-Ga.;
- 28) L.C. Smith Double Barrel 12-Ga.;
- 29) Hawkins Muzzle Loader 50-Cal.;
- 30) Winchester Mod. 94 Carbine, Pre-64

Misc. Items: Bamboo Fishing Rod, Shakespeare Wonder Rod & 1 Fishing Tackle Box w/Fishing Items.

REGULAR AUCTION BEGINS AT 5:00 PM
Community Banks, N.A., Executor of Andrew C. Long Estate Shirley G. Helwig, VP/TO

TERMS: Cash. Personal checks accepted only from persons having an established account w/auctioneer or approval prior to auction. Items Subject to 6% PA Sales Tax. All Federal & State Gun Laws will be Observed

AUCTIONEERS: Dockey #AU229L (717-758-6004) & Dockey-Romberger #AU1683L (758-4597) & Deppen #AU1957L



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TERRE HILL WAREHOUSE
Tues 12/31, Thurs 1/2 & Fri 1/3 8-4
Grading & Receiving: George & John Martin

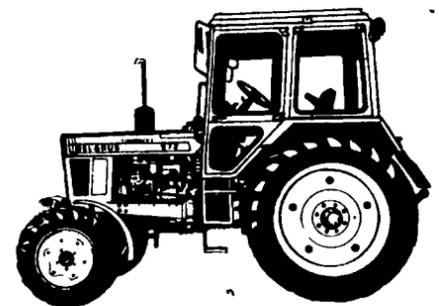
PARADISE WAREHOUSE Buyer & Trucker, Bob Garver Home #717-442-8600 Mobile #717-371-3533 PO Box 192 Paradise, PA 17566 717-687-9517	TERRE HILL WAREHOUSE Buyer, Larry Weaver Home #717-354-7477 Mobile #717-468-6897 Between Terre Hill & Bowmansville Off 625 on Sawmill Rd (Henry Garman Farm) 717-445-8309
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